

MEMORIAL

OF

THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS,

PRAYING

*An appropriation for the improvement of the harbor of that city.*

MARCH 21, 1848.

Ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled:*

The memorial of the Mayor and City Council of the city of St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, in behalf of the inhabitants thereof,

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS:

That the city of St. Louis, from its peculiar location and natural advantages, being near the geographical centre of the vast Mississippi valley, a valley unsurpassed on the globe for the fertility of its soil, and the amount and variety of its agricultural and mineral productions, has risen in point of population, wealth and commerce, with a rapidity not excelled, if equalled, by any city in the Union, containing now a population of nearly 60,000 souls, and being the commercial emporium of the States of Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, and western Wisconsin. It is also the point whence are fitted out the trapping and trading expeditions for the Rocky mountains, New Mexico, Chihuahua, and Durango, and the depot for the peltries and bullion brought home in return. Having a United States arsenal, it is the place whence have been fitted out the military expeditions which have conquered New Mexico and Chihuahua; and the greater portion of the field ammunition and shells used in the reduction of Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico have been manufactured and issued to the army at the St. Louis arsenal. For the amount so manufactured and issued since the commencement of the Mexican war, we respectfully refer your honorable bodies to the report of Captain Bell, commandant of said arsenal, appended to this memorial.

The number of steamboats engaged in carrying on the trade of which St. Louis is the centre, is greater than that of any city in the west, (New Orleans excepted.) The largest class of boats engaged on the lower Mississippi can ascend to St. Louis, with scarcely any exception, during all stages of the water, and at all seasons of the year—thus St. Louis is likewise made the great depot of the ascending trade for the upper Mississippi and Missouri; and the commercial interest of the Atlantic, the manufactur-

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ing interest of the east, the planting interest of the south, and the agricultural and mineral interests of the west, are thus alike interested in its prosperity and conservation, and any calamity that would befall it would be a national calamity.

It is well known to your honorable bodies that our city is situated upon a rocky shore, in the form of a crescent, with the convex side towards the river, while the opposite concave shore is entirely an alluvial formation, mostly of sand, which readily yields to the current, and fearful abrasions are constantly going on, widening the bed of the river, and leaving deposits of sand along the St. Louis shore. For many years our harbor has thus become obstructed and been diminished by the formation of these bars, and Congress has from time to time appropriated money for the preservation and improvement of the same, which has been expended under the direction of the Topographical Engineer's department, on works commenced by its officers, but never completed. These obstructions have increased to that extent, that more than one half of the city is effectually cut off from any communication with the river. Heretofore the disaster only affected the southern half of the city; but now an immense sand bar has formed opposite the northern limits of the city, and is rapidly extending downwards, already cutting off seven blocks from the river. This bar threatens to form a junction with that extending upwards from Duncan's island, and effectually to destroy our harbor. The causes of these sand deposits are the deflection of the current above the city from the Missouri to the Illinois shore, above and beyond Bloody island, and, as already stated, widening the bed of the river by the abrasion of the last-named shore and forcing large portions of the water down east of Bloody island. The remedy is, the construction of works that will close the channel on the east side of the island, and deflect the current against the rock-bound shore of the city. The appropriations of the United States have been expended for this purpose; and the works commenced by the agents of the government are in as good state of preservation as the stage in which they were left, and the violent action of the waters to which they have been exposed, could lead us to expect. The longitudinal dike commenced by the United States, extending downwards from the foot of Bloody island, was completed by the city last summer, and connected by a cross-dike with the foot of Bloody island, as the current had washed behind it and scooped out a deep channel between it and the island. The ordinance herewith transmitted, recently passed by the city council, authorizes the expenditure of the remainder of the money authorized by the charter to be expended, and exhausts the means and power placed at the disposal of the city for effecting this object. Your honorable bodies must be aware that the means of the city applicable to this object are entirely inadequate to effect the same—that is, to carry out and complete the works commenced by the United States—and also of the great danger of delaying the completion of the works when commenced. The force of the water, and the nature of the foundation upon which they are to be constructed, are such, that if left in an unfinished state a portion of them must be destroyed, and a portion of the appropriation lost. The mayor and city council, in behalf of the inhabitants of the city of St. Louis, therefore respectfully solicit the aid of Congress in the matter, and ask that an appropriation adequate to complete the works may be made by Congress. Your memorialists would further state that it may be impossible for the city to expend any of the

money appropriated by the ordinance above referred to, unless accompanied by an appropriation from Congress. The money is to be expended in the construction of works beyond the jurisdiction of the State of Missouri, and within the jurisdiction of the State of Illinois: the city may thus again be enjoined (as she formerly has been) and prevented from executing the same, unless the works should be commenced and carried on under the superintendence of an agent of the general government.

The peculiarity of the situation, the urgent necessity of constructing the works, and the great interests to be subserved, we hope will procure an early and favorable consideration of the same. For further particulars your memorialists would respectfully refer your honorable bodies to the able reports of the different engineers who have heretofore had charge of the work, and to the different reports of former committees of your honorable bodies, on the subject.

GEORGE MAGUIRE,

*President Board of Aldermen and Acting Mayor.*

A. L. MILLS,

ISAIAH FORBES,

B. T. BLENNERHASSETT,

JAMES GLASGOW,

J. G. SHELVIN,

WILSON PRIMM,

REUBEN KNOX,

*Of the Board of Aldermen.*

DEMETRIUS A. MAGEHAUS, Chairman.

HUGH ROSE,

ROBERT A. MOORE,

HENRY C. LYNCH,

JACOB P. THOMAS,

D. W. DIXON,

LOUIS DUBREUIL,

WM. ROBB,

*Of the Board of Delegates.*

SAMUEL HAWKEN,

LOUIS BACH.

The following is the response of Capt. Bell, commandant at the U. S. arsenal, to a joint committee of the city council, appointed to procure an official statement of the operations of said arsenal since the commencement of the Mexican war, and the condition of the harbor at that point.

No. 2.—*Report of the joint committee of the city council appointed to wait on Captain Bell, commandant United States arsenal.*

*To the honorable the City Council of the city of St. Louis:*

The joint committee of the city council, who were charged with the duty of obtaining from Capt. Wm. H. Bell, commanding arsenal at St. Louis, information in reference to the amount of munitions of war prepared and issued from said arsenal since the beginning of the war with Mexico, report that they have conferred with Capt. Bell, and have received from him the accompanying communications, which they present to the city council without comment.

Respectfully,

HENRY C. LYNCH,  
*Com. of the Board of Delegates.*  
WILSON PRIMM,  
*Com. of the Board of Aldermen.*

No. 3.—*Reply of Captain Bell to the joint committee.*

ST. LOUIS ARSENAL, MISSOURI,  
February 14, 1848.

GENTLEMEN: I have read your communication of the 10th instant, transmitting a resolution of the city council of the city of St. Louis, calling for certain information in reference to the amount of munitions of war prepared and issued from the arsenal since the beginning of the war with Mexico, and have the honor to state, in answer, that the enclosed paper will probably exhibit the information called for.

As regards the inquiries concerning the variations in that part of the city harbor adjoining the landing of this arsenal, since my arrival in 1840, I have the honor to state that these variations in the bed of the river opposite and adjoining this landing, in diminution in the depth of the water at all seasons, in the moving of the main channel eastward or away from the landing, and in the accumulation of high and broad banks of sand from 800 to 1,500 feet in length, have been exceedingly great for so short a period of time, and that they seem to be steadily increasing, and in the same order or ratio of the deterioration of the city harbor; proceeding, as they evidently do, from the same causes or obstructions which exist in the river above the harbor. The difficulties of landing in consequence of these accumulations have become so great, that steamers never attempt to approach the landing but in the high water of June and July; and there has been, in consequence, but one delivery of ordnance stores at the landing for several years past.

I am, gentlemen, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. H. BELL,  
*Capt. Commanding Arsenal.*

MESSRS. WILSON PRIMM and HENRY C. LYNCH,  
*Committee.*



No. 4.—*Statement of the principal articles of ordnance and ordnance stores manufactured and issued to the army from the St. Louis arsenal, Missouri, since the commencement of the war with Mexico, to this date.*

Manufactured and issued to the army—			
Rounds of field ammunition of every description of shells and round shot	-	-	18,547
Rounds of siege artillery ammunition	-	-	1,000
			<hr/> 19,547
Musket and other cartridges for small arms of every description	-	-	8,443,935
Musket balls, pressed and cast	-	-	8,306,748
Musket balls made ready for issue	-	-	5,392,861
			<hr/> 13,699,609
Rifle balls, pressed and cast	-	-	3,743,200
Rifle balls made ready for issue	-	-	915,632
			<hr/> 4,658,832
Charges of carbine and musket buck-shot	-	-	5,419,200
Fuzes for 8 and 10-inch shells	-	-	25,281
Fuzes for 6, 12, and 24-pounder shells	-	-	30,901
Fuzes, various calibres, made ready for issue	-	-	25,560
Priming tubes	-	-	45,310
Eight and ten-inch shells manufactured at St. Louis	-	-	8,922
Boxes for arms and ammunition	-	-	13,158
Boxes made and ready for issue	-	-	1,757
			<hr/> 14,915
Weight of shot and shells fabricated at St. Louis	-	-	847,562½ pounds.
Weight of canister shot fabricated at St. Louis	-	-	23,324 “
Issued to the army—			
Field cannon, with carriages, harness, implements and equipments complete	-	-	17
Caissons, travelling forges, and battery wagons, with harness, implements, and equipments complete	-	-	17
Muskets, rifles, carbines and pistols, implements, equipments, and accoutrements complete	-	-	15,776
Swords, sabres, do	-	-	4,612
Flints	-	-	109,879
Repaired for the army—			
Muskets, rifles, carbines and pistols, and their accoutrements and implements	-	-	7,147
Swords and sabres	-	-	1,074
Belts, various cartridge-boxes, bayonet scabbards, and holsters and housings	-	-	15,711
Weight of principal articles expended in fabrication—			
Powder, pounds	-	-	191,584
Lead, pounds	-	-	1,198,003
Paper, pounds	-	-	26,147
Cotton cloth, yards	-	-	8,720
Flannel, yards	-	-	3,860
Weight of stores shipped or forwarded	-	-	2,708,422

## Hands employed—

Smallest number employed, being the first month of the war	47
Largest number employed per month	517
Average number employed per month	142

WM. H. BELL,

Capt. Commanding Arsenal.

ST. LOUIS ARSENAL, Mo., February 14, 1848.

I do hereby certify that the foregoing documents, numbered two, three, and four, are correct copies of the original on file in this office.

Attest:

JAS. LEMON,

City Register.

RESPONSE

THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA

IN ANSWER

*To the resolutions of the State of Vermont on the subject of slavery and the war with Mexico.*

March 21, 1848.

*Ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.*

*Response of the General Assembly of the State of Alabama to the preamble and resolutions of the State of Vermont on the subject of slavery and of the war with Mexico.*

The State of Alabama deems it proper to respond in a respectful manner to the preamble and resolutions of the State of Vermont. In thus responding, Alabama, as a sovereign State of the American Union, formed its opinions on the subject of slavery at the adoption of the constitution and the admission of the State into the Union. This opinion has never been changed, nor has any opinion expressed either by the citizens in their private intercourse, in their popular assemblies, or General Assembly, upon the subject of slavery, been changed, nor will it be retracted. So far as the war with Mexico is concerned, we regard all honorable efforts to conclude a speedy peace with that republic as having been made by the President of the United States. We regard the war as one of necessity, for the protection of the rights of American citizens, and which could not be avoided without a flagrant violation of their rights by the Chief Magistrate of the nation. This question has been settled by Congress in 1846, and while Alabama refuses to be hickled upon a subject of so much importance to the honor of nations, Vermont may

Therefore be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, That his excellency the governor of this State send to the governor of every State in the Union a copy of the foregoing response, as well as to our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

L. P. WALKER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

AND A. WINSTON,

President of the Senate.

